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GULL
BULLETIN

VOLUME 5

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY, 1923

NUMBER 1

JANUARY (6th ANNUAL) MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday evening, 11th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Assembly Hall of the Public Library, corner McAllister and Larkin Sts. Take elevator to third floor. Car lines No. 5 or No. 19.

Annual reports will be presented and officers and directors elected for the ensuing year.

Mr. Joseph Dixon of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, has kindly agreed to tell us something of his experiences in the field during the season of 1922. Visitors are welcome.

* * *

JANUARY FIELD TRIP will be taken to Lake Merritt, Oakland, on Sunday, January 14th.

San Francisco members will take Key Route boat at 9 a. m., and Grand Avenue car on 22nd Street train at mole, leaving car at Perkins Street and Grand Avenue.

East Bay members transfer from any main line to Grand Avenue, or Lake Shore Avenue cars, leaving cars at the above mentioned point.

The party will form at the corner of Perkins Street and Grand Avenue at 9:45 a. m. and proceed to the duck enclosure on the near-by lake shore, in order to witness the feeding of the wild ducks, which takes place at 10 a. m.

Trestle Glen is rapidly being built up, but a pleasant supplementary walk can still be taken through the district, which has always afforded acceptable habitat for numerous land species.

The European widgeon has come back, as usual, and will probably be found grazing on the lawn with the baldpates. The varieties of species and numbers of individuals have been fully sustained this season, except in the case of the green-winged teal, of which only one small flock has been recorded as visiting the lake.

* * *

PROCEEDINGS OF THE DECEMBER MEETING: The seventy-first regular meeting of the Association was held on December 14th, in the Technical Room of the San Francisco Public Library, with President Kibbe in the chair; Miss Isabel Ames, Secretary; twelve members and five guests in attendance.

The feature of the evening was provided by Miss Catharine M. Flinn, Research Technician in Anatomy, University of California, and consisted of the review, with interpretations, of one of the legends of the Yana Indians, as recorded in "Yana Texts," by Edward Sapir, together with "Yana Myths," collected by Roland B. Dixon. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol. 9, No. 1. February, 1910.

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The selected account dealt almost entirely with the doings of various birds, under the guise of a party given in the north by one Chief Flint Rock. The invitations were carried south by the humming bird, who buzzed most persistently at the smoke hole of the sweat-house, but great difficulty was experienced by the invitees in interpreting the summons. After unconvincing efforts by cranes, herons, geese, and the ever handy coyote, meadowlark woman was appealed to, and she interpreted the message, and the bird elans started north. Various experiences ensued, and some destination was ultimately reached, but the visitors were rather shabbily treated and lured into a prison whence they escaped only through the skill of Maldama, who chipped an aperture through the walls of Flint Rock House, shortly after which the legend dropped them unceremoniously, to find their way back as best they might.

Some twenty two species of bird are cited in the Yana Texts, as noted below, with characteristics or typifications following:

Sandpiper was a good runner; Eagle, an organizer, friend of all the people. Geese people, Crane people, White Geese people and Heron people were notable for their migrations and flocking habits. Hummingbird, for his swiftness and abilities as a messenger. Whistling swans, mentioned by name only, dwelt with the other shore birds. Meadowlark woman was intelligent, kindly, attractive; a good talker and interpreter. Bluejay was big-voiced, a leader; in other tales, cited as "starting things" but seldom finishing them. His voice was heard in the east, in the west, in the north, in the south. Fish Hawk Chief kept on spearing salmon. Blackbirds with "red under their wings" signified many people gathered together—the flocking habit. Killdeer person also brings messages,—a talkative gossip-carrier. Mountain Quail woman was young, attractive, pleasant.

Buzzard people, Crow people, Blue flies, went to hunt deer, i.e., deer carcasses. Woodpecker, a good provider for his family; thrifty, but not inclined to share. Loon woman was mysterious, dangerous. She wore a white necklace, made of the hearts of murdered suitors; perhaps due to weird cry of loon and its habit of not mixing with other birds when on breeding waters. Heron woman was a good fisher. Diver, a small duck, the enemy of loon. Duck and goose, saved from fire when sweat-house was burned by loon woman, wallowed flat on his feet into the lake. Owl and Yellow-hammer were the only birds called upon for aid by medicine men. Maldama, an unidentified dark brown bird, the size of a meadowlark, escaped from flint rock house; chipped flint off; possibly a thrasher, with his pick-ax bill.

Following Miss Flinn's very entertaining address, Mrs. A. S. Kibbe recounted her experiences in acting as foster-mother to an Anna hummer fledgling and training it to forage for itself when it was prepared to venture forth "on its own."



THE COMMERCIAL ASPECT OF BIRD CONSERVATION

A letter from DR. CASEY A. WOOD to the Editor of *The San Diego Union*,
December 20, 1922.

I often wonder how many Californians realize what a valuable asset their teeming wild-bird-life is for this State. Not only in the East, but in the Middle West, birds that once congregated along the shore lines as well as in the mountain, stream and sea, are now so sadly reduced in numbers that merely to have seen an individual of certain species once abundant, is an event for chronicle. In very few instances have native New England birds held their own against the hostile forces of advancing civilization. A recent book by Innes Hartley, a well known eastern ornithologist, tells the sad tale,

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long familiar to the trained naturalist, of the complete extinction of a number of useful and beautiful varieties. He instances, also, the increasing death rate in others and lists the pitiful few,—mostly of small importance,—that have survived and flourished. The beautiful passenger pigeon, our only North American parrot, the great auk, the Labrador duck and many another useful and ornamental bird,—once breeding in thousands and even millions,—are gone forever, while still others are approaching extinction, in spite of state, federal and international protective regulations.

This train of thought, relative to the importance of bird-life, in this state and its vanishing quality, was set in motion by your report, last week, of a projected "mud-hen drive" at Cuyamaca. Now, I have been a rather regular visitor to California for thirty years and have made a study of its remarkable flora and fauna during that period; and I am convinced that the spectacle of your magnificent display of birds, especially of your water-fowl, (the herons, pelicans, coots, ducks, curlews, sandpipers, et cet.), forms a very real and striking attraction for the tourist who, as everybody knows, often remains or returns as a permanent resident. He comes out of the fog and ice and snow of the east to the summerland of the Coast, and one of his chief delights is the appearance of flock after flock of shore birds, marsh birds, water birds and inland songsters in abundance. When the time comes, (and some of your local authorities believe that, at the present rate of diminution, it is not far off), that the Pacific states exhibit as few birds as the middle and eastern sections, one of the compelling attractions that California now holds for the visitor will have disappeared. This is, I assure you, no mere hypothesis: I have discussed the subject with hundreds of fellow tourists from the east and feel that I speak from first-hand knowledge.

The esthetic value of its avifauna forms no mean source of the state income; it may even be of as great monetary importance as is its agricultural value in ridding ranches and farm lands of countless myriads of hurtful insects, of thousands of destructive animals and of tons of noxious weed-seeds. Although these well understood facts furnish solid reasons for the careful conservation of the great majority of our feathered fowl, I waive them as arguments for bird protection and again present the attractiveness of California bird-life to the great army of annual visitors to this state. The presence of wild birds in their normal abundance converts many an otherwise dreary waste of water, sand or mud-flats into charming vistas much appreciated by the weary pilgrim from the east. Surely, such an appeal will have due weight in saving the useful life of every coot and, (I had almost added), of every other water fowl that makes glad California's ponds, rivers and lakes. Every innocent wild bird saved is a national treasure gained.

* * *

PUBLIC SHOOTING GROUND—GAME REFUGE BILL

As indicated in the November GULL, this vitally important measure came before the United States Senate early in December and was passed by that body on December sixth. It will come up before the House of Representatives sometime in January, probably before the fifteenth of the month.

Every bird-lover, everyone who is interested in intelligent conservation and development of our waning wealth of useful and profitable animal life, should secure for himself or herself the future satisfaction of knowing that

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he or she contributed toward the preservation of existing breeding and foraging grounds, without which our migratory birds cannot survive and where intelligent supervision will insure against wanton or careless destruction. Have you done what you could to secure the support of your Congressman for this bill? Write to him again today at Washington and induce your acquaintances to write or wire their friends in Congress to support the Anthony Bill, H. R. 5823, when it comes up for passage.

Time is short, and the need is urgent.

* * *

DECEMBER FIELD TRIP was taken on Sunday, December 17th, to Golden Gate Park. The rains of several days preceding had thoroughly soaked the ground. The day was overcast and the morning's heavy mist and threats of worse resulted in a very small party, every member of which, however, felt more than repaid for the defiance hurled at the weather man and the sinister elements.

The prize feature of the day was spread before us at the very outset, when twelve male and twenty-four female ring-necked ducks were discovered at the northerly end of the Chain-of-Lakes, as close as possible to the Forty-third Avenue entrance. A little further along, we heard dimly-remembered whistles and caught a small bunch of green-winged teal in the very act. Three other finds were a pipit in the stadium, red-breasted nuthatches and a varied thrush. Spreckels, Lloyd and Stow Lakes were visited in turn and each contained interesting specimens. The party broke up at the last-named place in time for lunch at the Japanese tea garden and a peep in at the lecture in the Academy of Sciences. Members making the trip were Miss King, Mr. and Mrs. Kibbe. Scout Master A. H. Myer, with scouts Richard Heller, Bertram Hirsch and Edmund Wagner, filled out the party and kept enthusiasm at high pitch. Three members and four guests.

Along the Key Route were seen glaucous-winged, western and California gulls, white-winged scoter and sandpipers. In the park were encountered: Pied-billed grebe, glaucous-winged and California gulls; mallards, baldpates, green-winged teal, shoveller, canvasback, scaup, ring-necked ducks and a female bufflehead; ruddy ducks, Hutchins goose, coots and sharp-shinned hawk; western belted kingfisher, black phoebe, Nuttall and song sparrows; San Francisco towhee, Audubon warbler, pipit and red-breasted nuthatch; chickadee, bush-tit, hermit thrush and varied thrush. Thirty species in all.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

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Meets second Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p.m., in Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Streets.

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Subscription to Bulletin alone, 35c per year.

Single copies 5c